

THE INDYPENDENT

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WHAT IS THIS AMERICA?

Featuring interviews with Kathy Kelly, Al Giordano of *NarcoNews*, GI resister Camilo Mejía, & Lynne Stewart on a people's patriotism. p6

Confessions of an Unrepentant FLAG-BURNER

By Jed Brandt

Burning the flag is downright un-American. It's alienated and aggressive, a rejection of all the great things this country is supposed to represent. Flag-burning is a big fuck-you to our whole national mythology – and that's exactly the point. Anger is legitimate, and not just for this country's original sins of slavery and genocide. Not just for the firestorms of Hiroshima, Vietnam and Fallujah.

I burned my first flag in 1990 on the steps of the Art Institute of Chicago, a college and museum that had once been the Bauhaus, an innovative European design center that fled Nazi terror in the 1930s to re-establish itself in the heart of America. It was an ironic stage, to say the least.

Growing up in Ronald Reagan's America, life was grim. My hometown, Chicago, was deindustrializing. The steel mills and factories that were the city's backbone were closed and rusting, and nothing seemed to be replacing them but crack houses, prisons and yuppie boutiques. We were at war then, too, with a battle between fake democracy and fake socialism enough to kill any hope that a better world was possible, especially with all those nukes getting waved around.

The flag was a symbol – not of freedom – which was as hard to find then as it is now, but of an exceptionally American indifference

towards what was actually going on. Wherever I saw the ugliest side of this country, there was that flag with a "love it or leave it" not far behind. I wasn't leaving the land of my birth, but I couldn't just take it either. In looking to the future, I decided to burn the past.

Dread Scott Tyler, a student artist and fellow communist, had caused a major ruckus when his graduation piece consisted of an American flag draped across the floor in front of a photo montage entitled "What Is the Proper Way to Display the American Flag?" There was a comment book for responses, but in order to comfortably write in it, you had to step on the flag. It was great, and pissed off the right people. Dread Scott was totally unapologetic, even when his family had to hide after a hail of death threats.

Whipped up by local right-wing politicos, thousands of rabid Korean War-era veterans staged daily rallies in front of the school demanding



FEEL THE PRIDE: The author in 1990, left, pledging a different allegiance. Photo: Bob Kusel/Newsweek

censorship. They burned effigies of Dread Scott hanging from a noose. The artist was black; the vets were entirely middle-aged white men. They called other students "art faggots." A few fistfights broke out and the police weren't arresting the thugs. People were afraid.

The ugliness of the scene confirmed everything I had thought.

These patriots were the proud soldiers of empire, the gook-killers, the lynchers, the book-burners and flag-wavers. In the name of freedom, they were imposing mandatory patriotism.

I couldn't just stand by and watch. This wasn't about symbols anymore, or the form of "free speech." It was about power.

After making a few calls to the local media, I grabbed some friends and headed out to the suburbs for some midnight flag-raiding. We got a half dozen in no time flat before speeding back to the city.

By the time we arrived at the Art Institute the next day, there were at least 150 cameramen and reporters and a handful of "patriots." The cops established a cordon for us to get our burn on. And burn we did.

I gave a statement that this wasn't just a rejection of America, it was an embrace of the world. I was earnest, for all the good that did once the media got their pictures. Not one mainstream publication told our story. They had their own script at the ready: The American flag is a sacred icon that is being desecrated by traitors.

The traditional two-party debate broke out, with conservatives howling for blood and liberals at

best mumbling defensively about free speech.

For our part, we had the power to provoke, but could not effectively engage the political firestorm we sparked.

CODA

The patriotic orgy after Sept. 11 brought all this rushing back. It wasn't just the billboard propaganda like some Nuremberg rally redux. I saw mobs in Queens waving flags into taxis with Pakistani drivers, yelling, "Do you love this flag?" I saw turban-wearing Sikhs put flags all over their shirts in fear, not allegiance. I saw the worst side of America, yet again, rallying under the national symbol for a course of action that has nothing to do with justice or even what the American people want. It's not over. This fight is here to stay.

Whenever I hear people who want to wash the flag instead of burning it, I think of how deep blood stains.

Fifteen years after I burned the flag in Chicago, Congress is yet again debating whether to amend the Constitution to ban flag-burning – the first time the Constitution would prohibit political speech.

If they want to see more flags burn, that's the best way to do it.



THE INDYPENDENT



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WHAT IS INDYMEDIA?

With autonomous chapters in more than 120 cities throughout the world, the Independent Media Center is an international network of volunteer media activists.

The IMC seeks to create a new media ethic by providing progressive, in-depth and accurate coverage of issues. We are a community-based organization using media to facilitate political and cultural self-representation. We seek to analyze issues affecting individuals, communities and ecosystems by providing media tools and space to those seeking to communicate. We espouse open dialogue and placing the means of communication and creativity back in the hands of the people, away from the drive of profit.

The *Indydependent* is funded by benefits, subscriptions, donations, grants and ads from organizations and individuals with similar missions.

WHAT CAN I DO TO GET INVOLVED?

The IMC has an open door. You can write for *The Indydependent*, film events and rallies, self-publish articles to the web, take photos or just help us run the office. As an organization relying on volunteer support, we encourage all forms of participation.

The print team reserves the right to edit articles for length, content and clarity. We welcome your participation in the entire editorial process.

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Internet

Rich Girls, Hobby Whores

Barnard College girls suffer from a gamut of stereotypes – everything from outspoken lesbians to uptight bookworms to easy lays. But there are a few young women who combine all three: the nerdy, feminist, sex workers.

BY REBECCA DUNN

Meet "Phoebe" and "Christa," two seniors with deans' list standings, upper-class backgrounds, and a specialty in foot and urine fetishism. They've cleaned apartments dressed as schoolgirls, stripteased, massaged and peed on lawyers, sometimes together and sometimes separately. They congratulate themselves on falling short of 'real sex stuff' (oral and intercourse), but know that their parents would kill them anyway.

"I just feel bad asking them for money," said Christa, whose father makes well over \$400,000 a year. "It's just really nice to be able to make a ton of money quickly and spend it wherever I want." Phoebe has a similar guilt complex and an urge to break away from her parents, who, combined, make about \$300,000 a year.

Their friend "Jenny," a recent graduate of the University of Virginia, tried to maintain no sex boundaries but eventually decided to have intercourse with clients. "It's so much easier to just be a prostitute. And yeah, who cares, I'm rich now."

The three girls market themselves on Craigslist, under the "erotic services" section, as "non-pros" or "schoolgirls," because, according to Phoebe, "being nubile sells."

They began with lower-caliber jobs like massage and run-of-the-mill cleaning. They soon realized that they could get away with quicker jobs if they only eroded their boundaries. "It takes two seconds to pee on someone, and three more seconds to get their money and leave," said Phoebe, "the hardest part is pretending it's normal for me to do it."

The Sex Workers Outreach Project (SWOP), the first program in the country to focus on the provision of legal services and policy advocacy for sex workers, compiled a March 2005 report, "Behind Closed Doors," which surveyed New York City's "indoor sex workers," i.e., those not working on the street. According to the study, 48 percent of sex work has moved to the Internet.

"Internet opened sex work for a lot of women," said Robyn Few, a SWOP director from San Francisco, "and it's become a tool for our kids. Our kids are entrepreneurs raised in a capitalist society. We're seeing a lot of 'schoolgirls' – or at least those who claim to be – using the erotic pages and saying 'this is simple.'"

According to Few, the police commissioner of San Francisco – Craigslist's birthplace – recently announced on television that street



prostitution had gone down 50 percent since the Internet boom in the late 90s. "It's got to be more than that by now," she suspects.

Whereas the anonymity of indoor sex work makes it difficult to pinpoint workers' demographics, New York SWOP director Juhu Thukral would not be surprised by the Barnard stories. According to the March report, indoor sex workers include anyone from babysitters to drug addicts to freelance artists to accountants. Like the Barnard women, 33 percent of those surveyed had a sustainable income without sex work. "Most people would be surprised at how diverse sex workers are as a group. It's made it easy for the middle class and people with stability in their lives to get involved with the use of the Internet, cellular phones, hotel rooms, whatever."

How safe and anonymous are these women? Although Thukral told *The Indydependent* that streetwalkers are more vulnerable to work hazards, the report found that 47 percent of the indoor sex workers had been arrested through undercover sting operations. Forty-six percent had been forced by a client to do something he or she did not want to do, and 42 percent had been threatened or beaten.

The Barnard girls have yet to become one of these statistics, save for minor, "annoying" coercions from clients for sex. In fact they roll their eyes at warnings, claim they're careful to screen their clients and draw attention back toward the new hundreds in their cash boxes. Like 70% of the workers on the report, the girls want to abandon the business eventually for legitimate career plans. In the meantime their biggest fear is neither rape nor the police, but their parents. "I don't care who knows it. In fact I kind of like talking about it," said Phoebe, "But if my parents find out I'm fucked."

WHERE DO I GET MY COPY OF THE INDYPENDENT?

BELOW 14TH ST.

Bluestockings Books & Café
172 Allen St.

Times Up!
49 E. Houston St.

Lotus Café
Clinton & Stanton Sts.

**May Day Books at Theater
for the New City**
155 First Ave. (Btw 9th & 10th Sts.)

Housing Works
126 Crosby St.

LGBT Center
213 W. 13th St.

Shakespeare & Co. Books
1 Whitehall St.

Brecht Forum
451 West St.

14TH TO 96TH ST.

Revolution Books
9 W. 19th St.

Chelsea Sq. Diner
23rd St. & 9th Ave.

Domvys

413 W. 44th St.

Second Wave Laundrycenter
55th St. & 9th Ave.

ABOVE 96TH ST.

Labyrinth Books
536 W. 112th St.

Kim's Video
113th St. & Broadway

Coogan's Bar
169th St. & Broadway

BROOKLYN

Tillie's of Brooklyn
248 DeKalb Ave.

Vox Pop
1022 Cortelyou Rd.

Green Apple Café
110 DeKalb Ave.

Marquet Patisserie
680 Fulton St.

Freddy's Bar and Backroom
Dean St. & 6th Ave.

Community Book Store
7th Ave. & Carroll Sts.

Tea Lounge
Union St. @ 7th Ave.
9th St. @ 7th Ave.

Atlantis Super Laundry Center
472 Atlantic Ave.

Photoplay Video
933 Manhattan Ave.

Verb Cafe
Bedford Ave. & N. 5th

Jane Doe Books
93 Montrose Ave.

Make the Road by Walking
301 Grove St.

Spoken-Words Cafe
4th Ave. & Union St.

QUEENS

Sunnyside Library
43-06 Greenpoint Ave.

East Elmhurst Library
95-06 Astoria Blvd.

Langston Hughes Library
100-01 Northern Blvd.

Café Aubergine
49-22 Skillman Ave.

A FREE PAPER FOR FREE PEOPLE

SUNNYSIDE LIBRARY

43-06 Greenpoint Ave.

BRONX

Bronx Museum
165th St. & Grand Concourse

The Point
940 Garrison Ave.

Baychester Library
2049 Asch Loop

LONG ISLAND

Free Space
Ronkonkoma
16 E. 8th St. Huntington
Station

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What's Black and Gold with Blue All Over?

The Puerto Rican Day Parade was marred by the mass arrest of 75 members of the Almighty Latin King and Queen Nation. According to eyewitness reports, the Latin Kings were along the parade route dressed in their traditional black and gold colors. Police issued an order to disperse, and within a few minutes, the group was surrounded and placed in handcuffs. Those arrested were charged with disorderly conduct and unlawful assembly. The gang, which has several former leaders imprisoned on murder and drug charges, has become more political in recent years, conducting voter-registration drives and joining antiwar marches. — KAZEMBE BULAGOON

Loot, Loot, Loot for the Home Team

A new race has broken out between the Yankees and Mets – not on the baseball diamond, but in City Hall and Albany. The teams are dueling to see which ballclub receives more in taxpayer support to build a new stadium, at the expense of city residents.

The box score on public funding looks like this:

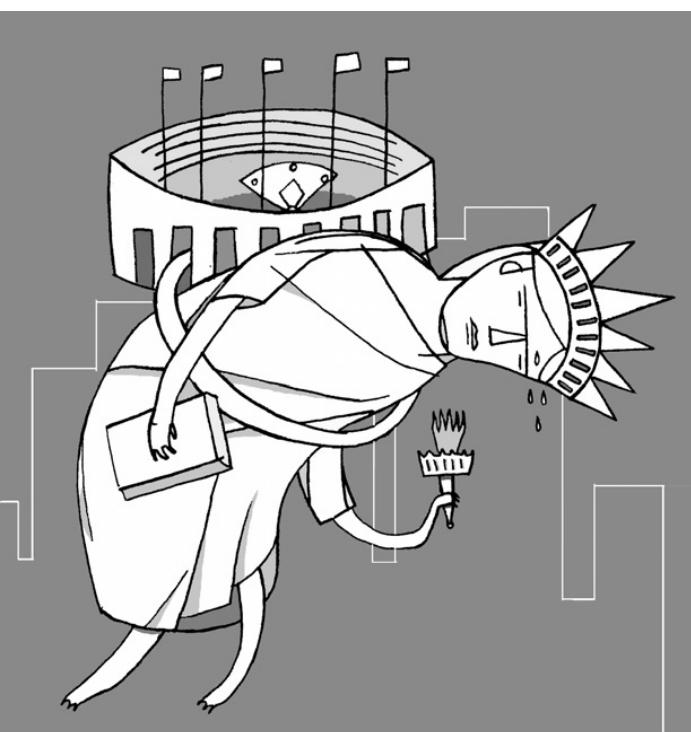
NEW YANKEE STADIUM

- \$135 million in city funds to replace displaced parks and other infrastructure costs
- \$90 million from the MTA for a new Metro-North rail station and subway renovations
- \$70 million in state funds to build parking garages
- Sales tax exemptions on construction material (est. \$22 million)
- Tax-free bonds (est. \$13 million per year)
- No rent or property taxes (even though the stadium is on city-owned land)

NEW METS STADIUM

- \$180 million in city and state funds for infrastructure improvements
- Sales tax exemptions on construction material (est. \$19 million)
- Tax-free bonds (est. \$11.2 million per year)
- No rent or property taxes (even though the stadium will be on city-owned land)
- If New York City lands the Olympics, taxpayers would pay \$108 million more to convert the stadium.

—MIKE BURKE



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Compassion is Dead

NO NEW YORK STATE MEDICAL-POT LAW THIS YEAR

BY STEVEN WISHNIA

Despite the pleas of multiple-sclerosis sufferer Montel Williams, New York State won't be getting a medical-marijuana law this year. A bill to have the state license cultivators to grow marijuana for the terminally ill "is dead for this current session," says an aide to Assemblymember Richard Gottfried (D-Manhattan), its sponsor.

The bill's supporters had thought it would pass because it had finally acquired a Republican co-sponsor, essential for getting anywhere in the GOP-dominated State Senate. But that sponsor, State Sen. Vincent Leibell (R-Brewster), backed off after the

U.S. Supreme Court ruled against Angel Raich on June 6, denying her claim that her homegrown medicine was beyond the reach of federal laws regulating interstate commerce. Leibell told the press after the decision that for New York to legalize medical marijuana would be, "In effect, setting up our citizens to violate federal law."

Leibell has asked State Attorney General Eliot Spitzer for an opinion on whether an effective state medical-pot measure is legally feasible. Spitzer, who is seeking the 2006 Democratic gubernatorial nomination, opposed legalizing marijuana during his 2002 campaign.

The federal law that says marijuana has no

valid medical use and makes cultivation and distribution felonies has been in place for 35 years. "It's ridiculous in a nation that claims to be compassionate," Williams said at a June 20 press conference at City Hall. "We're the only country in the world that makes it so illegal you can't even research it."

Gottfried will introduce another bill next year, even if federal law renders it largely symbolic. "It is more important than ever for New York to follow the ten other states that have passed medicinal-marijuana laws," he said in a statement after the Supreme Court decision. "State laws are a potent way to send a message to the President, Congress and the courts."

THIRD STREET TENANTS WIN ROUND

Embattled tenants at 47 E. Third St. won a victory June 24, when State Supreme Court Justice Paul Feinman issued a preliminary injunction barring their landlord from evicting them until their case is settled. The building's owners, Alistair and Catherine Economakis, have been trying to oust all the tenants, claiming that they need all 15 apartments to make a home for themselves and their child. Justice Feinman noted that the law allowing landlords to move into rent-stabilized apartments has generally applied to one unit at a time, not to whole buildings; that the tenants would face severe hardship if evicted; and that there is no effective penalty for fraudulent "personal occupancy" claims.

MET COUNCIL FOUNDER JANE BENEDICT DIES AT 93

Jane Benedict, founder of the Metropolitan Council on Housing, died June 18. She was 93. Formerly a union organizer, Benedict started Met Council in 1958 as a coalition of community groups working to protect tenants from being forced out of their neighborhoods by gentrification and Robert Moses' urban-renewal schemes. She was active in the group until the 1990s. She was instrumental in the wide adoption of the rent strike and sit-ins to get decent code-enforcement standards for tenants living in slum housing, and was a leader in the fight to get rent stabilization enacted. "Modest beyond words, Jane was dogged in her fight for tenants throughout New York, and a passionate and persistent advocate of the broader agenda for economic and social justice," says Met Council's current director, Jenny Laurie.

Take a Hike

RENT BOARD VOTES 5.5% INCREASE

BY STEVEN WISHNIA

Tenant activism over the last year has accomplished at least one thing: It's made the Rent Guidelines Board (RGB) pay lip service to the problems caused by the city's skyrocketing rents. Even landlord representative Steven Schleider said the city needed to replace rent-stabilized units lost to deregulation.

The board then voted to increase the price of affordable housing. By a 6-3 margin, it approved increases of 2.75 percent for a one-year lease renewal and 5.5 percent for two-year leases.

RGB tenant representative Adriene Holder said she was "very disappointed" by the results. As the RGB traditionally sets smaller increases in election years, she added, "I think the next two years are going to be really bad for tenants."

The board rejected a rent freeze on apartments by 6-3. Martin Zelnik, the only one of the five public members to vote for the freeze, said that while the RGB considers the effects of rising fuel costs on landlords' incomes, it does not take into account the effects of rising rents, subway fares and college tuition on tenants' quality of life.

The Crusade and the Closet

BY NICHOLAS POWERS

There is no gay pride in Bed-Stuy. As I walked to the Franklin subway station to go to the West Village, I saw no rainbow flags, no stickers, no posters and no gays or lesbians holding hands. There is Christian pride, West Indian pride and Black pride. You can stand on a corner and curse the white man or the devil but you can't be openly gay without risking your life.

On Sunday, June 26 two great gatherings occurred in New York: one was Gay Pride Day in the Village, the other a Christian Crusade led by Billy Graham. Both events promise liberation, the former from shame and the latter from sin. But both are designed to foil the hopes of those who go.

Gay Pride Day is the only day the Village is truly integrated. Black and Latino gays and lesbians flee to it to escape the violence of their neighbors. They go to pretend that it is safe to be gay. It's not. It is safe in the Village and Chelsea where the white gay elite has used privilege to create a false utopia. It is false because the majority of gays and lesbians of color still live in daily terror of being outed and beaten.

Many people of color believe homosexuality is a "white thing" but it's less a belief than our inheritance. When Africans were enslaved they were chained with metal and ideas, in particular the idea of race itself.

Racism grew up hand-in-hand with slavery and its icon was the Great Chain of Being. Europeans are at the top and as the chain descends the species becomes darker and dumber. Blacks are the bottom link. We are seen as talking monkeys, a step above the animal world and our closeness to nature means that like animals we do not love but lust.

Since we are assumed to be closer to nature our sex is assumed to be as unstoppable and inexhaustible as nature itself. One sees it in the Harlem Renaissance as Josephine Baker danced against a jungle backdrop in a banana belt. One sees it in Spike Lee's recent film *She Hate Me*. One sees it in our homophobia, where Minister Louis Farrakhan keeps gays out of the Million Man March and out of heaven.

Many people of color blindly hate homosexuality because it's condemned in the Bible, and blacks needed the Bible to condemn slavery. We accepted Christianity to achieve parity to whites, to shame them about the social inequality that contrasted with our spiritual equality. It's a tactic that cost us solidarity with our gay brothers and sisters.

I went to Billy Graham's Crusade in Queens. His message was comforting and dangerous. "There's going to come an end to... the world system in which we live, which the Bible calls 'of Satan,'" Graham said. He offered safety and salvation not only from the destruction of the world but the destruction of our souls by our sinful nature. We fear God because we are taught to fear ourselves. Yet in a secular reading, if religion created God, did it not also create sin? Doesn't one need the other?

Religion defines desire as sin and creates a community from fear and shame. Secular thought frees us from shame but not responsibility. It tells us to not deny desire, to accept the divisions between what we want, what we can have and who we are. It tells us to manage that split with as much grace and compassion for others as possible.

As night came party-goers filled the bars and clubs, to drink and grind hips in solidarity. It was obvious that in performing desire one can be trapped within it. Conservatives accuse gay pride marches of immoral hedonism. In a way they are right. Pleasure is immoral when used as a substitute for political struggle. Until gays march to integrate Bed-Stuy or the Bronx or where ever they are killed for daring to love each other, Gay Pride will be a beautiful celebration of an empty freedom to people like Sakia Gunn, a 15-year-old black girl killed in Newark, New Jersey two years ago when she told a man who was trying to pick her up that she was a lesbian.

Later that night, I rode the A line home and saw two black lesbians on the train holding hands, tickling each other's ears with whispers. A black man looked over and shook his head, turned again and his look became locked into a hate stare. I saw in that long winding distance between him and them the final route of the Gay Pride March.



Counter-clockwise from top right:

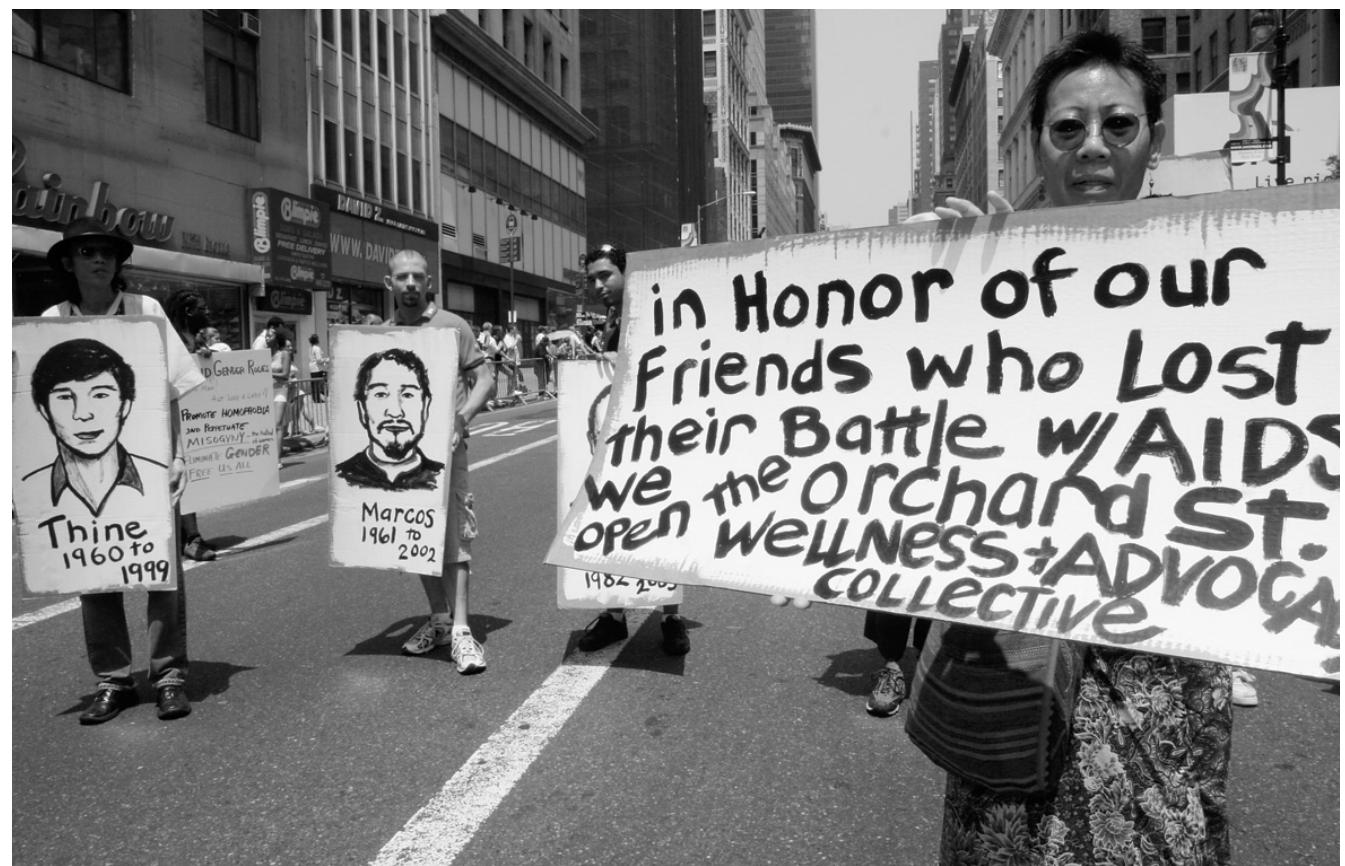
40th St and Fifth Ave., June 25. The Dyke March took over Fifth Ave. unpermitted for the 13th year in a row. While the march's organizers tried to exclude the trans community, pro-inclusion stickers were seen on the march and a high visibility of trans individuals. Photo by Edgar Mata

Washington Square Park, June 25. Queering the fountain – playful pride as the participants in the Dyke March engulf the park. Photo by Caitlin Benedetto/ Ida Images

Jackson Square, June 24. The first annual transfolk and allies march for justice and human rights, organized by Trans Justice. A people-of-color group, Trans Justice, brought a diverse and determined crowd into the streets. Photo by Caitlin Benedetto/ Ida Images

Fifth Ave., June 26. "We will never forget," the dead are remembered on the Pride Parade. Photo by Edgar Mata

Fifth Ave., June 26 Our global village – Colombian LGBTQ group sings with pride at the 36th annual Pride Parade. Photo by Oscar Durand



Iraqi Labor Tour Stirs Controversy

BY BENNETT BAUMER

Representatives from three Iraqi labor groups conducted a U.S. tour in June discussing the occupation, insurgency and the state of workers' rights and organizing in Iraq. Sponsored by U.S. Labor Against the War, the tour has sparked debate throughout the left internationally on how to resist the occupation. The three Iraqi unions all oppose the American-led military occupation – but differ on how to end it.

When U.S. forces invaded Iraq, bringing down Saddam Hussein's government, Iraqi unionists devised a plan to fan out throughout the country and organize workers. The Iraqi Federation of Trade Unions (IFTU) formed out of these initial efforts. The Trade Union Federation is the largest of its kind and represents workers in sectors including construction, oil, longshore, transportation and mechanics. In December 2003, U.S. troops raided the IFTU's offices and arrested eight union leaders, eventually releasing them without charge.

"We [IFTU] consider the U.S. and British troops occupiers," said Adnan Al Saffar in Arabic. Saffar, executive officer of the Union of Mechanics, Printing and Metal Workers, gave a talk at Cornell University in New York City on June 17. "Our demands are the withdrawal of foreign forces in Iraq."

During the early days of the occupation, American officials swept away many Hussein-era laws barring privatization and preventing the flight of capital, but they kept in place labor codes that outlawed strikes and independent labor organizing.

However, many leftists are critical of the Trade Union Federation. It is closely aligned with the Iraqi Communist Party, which served as part of the U.S.-installed Iraqi Governing Council; its successor, the interim regime of Prime Minister Iyad Allawi; and the current government. Allawi in particular drew the enmity of many Iraqis because he endorsed the devastating U.S. attacks on Fallujah, Najaf and Baghdad. As a result, many international leftists and Iraqis see the IFTU as collaborators. This accusation was probably a factor in the Jan. 4 assassination of the federation leader Hadi Saleh, which the union blames on the insurgency.

Little is known about the insurgency, but it is believed to include members of the former ruling Baathist party. Upon coming to power in the 1960s, the Baathists assassinated many communists based on information supplied by the CIA. Another trade union leader, Ali Hassan Abd of the General Union of Oil and Gas Workers, was assassinated on February 18. The Oil and Gas Workers also say insurgents were behind the killing.

The Federation of Workers Councils and Unions in Iraq (FWCUI), aligned with the Workers Communist Party of Iraq, doesn't hesitate in labeling its unionist rivals as collaborators. "Today the ICP and the IFTU again are acting as tools to subject the interests of the working class to the interests of the USA, the puppet government, political Islam, ultra-nationalists and employers," wrote Aso Jabar, international officer of the Workers Councils, in his union newsletter. Jabar's union also opposes the insurgency.

The Federation of Workers Councils came from organizing unemployed Iraqis. In militant protest, they pressured the U.S. occupation authority and successive Iraqi governments for benefits. There is also tension between the two federations



AL SAFFAR of the Trade Union Federation condemned the U.S. occupation while talking about a multi-religious and ethnic progressive Iraqi trade union movement.

Photo by George Cohen

as to who will inherit the resources, such as office space and computers, of the former official Baathist union.

"I think the workers councils are worried [old resources] will all be given to the IFTU," said David Bacon, a labor journalist who visited Iraq in May. However, Bacon added "without any question," the IFTU is a much larger union.

The third union on the tour is the Oil and Gas Workers, which represents workers in southern Iraq. Oil workers threatened to strike in January 2004 and won wage increases. They have also closed a refinery operated by Halliburton because the company was importing lower-paid foreign workers. All three labor unions oppose the privatization of Iraq's oil sector and economy. Al Saffar said Iraqi unions would draw a "red line in front of privatization and we will prevent this from happening no matter what sacrifices we take."

The Oil and Gas Workers call for a withdrawal of American troops and for U.N. peacekeepers to secure the country, a scenario few consider possible. While each union backs the right to resist, none back the armed resistance, which they term reactionary.

"The workers should fight for both ending the occupation and curbing the influence of the local reactionary groups including those within the Iraqi armed resistance," said Jalal Mohamad of the Federation of Workers Councils. "If this force is the armed resistance without progressive forces, the future will be bleak and gloomy. Iraq will end in civil war and in the hands of various reactionary militias. This fact is denied by the Western left."

For more on the debate on Iraq, occupation and resistance, go to nyc.indymedia.org.

Frieda Zames 1932 – 2005

Champion of the Disabled

The disability rights movement suffered a mighty loss June 16 when Frieda Zames, an activist, author and singer, died in her sleep. She was a mainstay of Disabled in Action, a civil rights organization founded in 1970, serving as president more than once and as vice president for legislative affairs at the time of her death. She was also on the boards of WBAI and the Center for Independence of the Disabled in New York.

Zames was central in the successful campaign to make New York City buses wheelchair accessible and had recently turned her focus to the ferries.

Said Eric Levine, musical director of the Disabled in Action Singers, "Frieda worked for disabled-rights before anyone knew what the concept

really meant and she and her sister ended up defining these concepts in her book... Frieda taught me a lot of what I know about the subject of disability, which helped me with my own identity as a person with a disability. Frieda's death leaves a big void, but her example leaves us all determined to struggle."

"Many of the victories in the disability civil rights movement we all now enjoy can be directly attributed to Frieda," said fellow activists Anne and Sidney Emerman. "A petite woman, she was a giant in our midst, truly a national and local treasure."

For more information, see www.disabledinaction.org.

—ELLEN DAVIDSON

Review

THE DISABILITY RIGHTS MOVEMENT, FROM CHARITY TO CONFRONTATION

BY DORIS ZAMES FLEISCHER AND FRIEDA ZAMES
TEMPLE UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2001

This book contains the story of Zames' personal struggle, but mostly it is a history of the disability rights movement, from the days when the disabled were patronized as "crippled" people to a new era when people with disabilities are demanding jobs, access and respect. Zames was one of the most important people in the process of shifting how we look at disability, in that her life personified those changes. In her book you will find the threads of this new way of looking at disability. —E.D.

Anti-war

Seattle Counter-Recruiters Pick a Fight

BY MARK TAYLOR-CANFIELD

SEATTLE, WA – Summer is typically the most active military enlistment season, but the growing student counter-recruitment movement is working hard to thwart those efforts. Organizers estimate that more than 150 students walked out of classes and marched on three different recruiting offices around Seattle on May 23. The recruiting centers were forced to close their doors temporarily, as students blockaded the facilities and picketed outside.

Three students were forcibly removed from the Army Recruiting Center at Northgate Mall by Sergeant First Class Jessica Hicks. Army spokesperson Bill Pierce maintains that Sgt. Hicks was protecting the recruiters and military property. "People can come into the station to talk about the Army," he said, "but they can't break into the station with the intent to do damage."

The students deny that they had any intention of damaging property. They claim they were loudly criticizing the military's recruitment practices on school campuses when they were physically forced out of the facility. After the students were ejected, the station closed its doors. Seattle Central Community College student Marlo Winter declared victory, "Nobody can be recruited while we are here."

During the demonstrations the students chanted, "Education, not war! Kick recruiters out the door!" They held signs saying, "Money For Education, Not Ammunition" and "I Want To Learn To Read, Not To Kill."

Two other recruiting centers were the focus of protests – one near the University of Washington and another by Garfield High School in the Central District. Garfield graduate Duwan Tyson traveled from Olympia with other students from Evergreen State College. "It was awesome," he told the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*. "They closed the doors on us and retreated."

The Marine recruiting center near the University of Washington locked its doors when protesters arrived. Military personnel dropped the shades and hid inside the building despite repeated requests from the students to talk with a recruiter. The Army Recruiting Station there also reportedly closed its doors.

On May 9, the Garfield High School Parent Teachers Student Association (PTSA) passed a resolution banning military recruiters from campus. According to Garfield PTSA President and Co-Chair Amy Hagopian, "Our PTSA has a mission to promote the welfare of children and youth and to support and speak out on their behalf. That's the mission of PTSAs everywhere in America. We would encourage other PTSAs to act on behalf of their mission and also look seriously at the recruitment happening in their schools and the nature of that recruitment, the frequency, the intensity and the hard pressure tactics."

Hagopian told *Democracy Now!*, "We can't physically stop them, and we can't legally stop them, but we can stand at the doors and explain that they're not welcome, as can every high school in the country. Somebody obviously needs to challenge this legally, but that's a hard task to ask of public schools that are strapped for money."

An Army recruiter told KPLU Radio in Seattle that the students' demonstrations had only succeeded in bringing the draft closer to reality. She claimed that protests at recruitment centers would result in fewer enlistments, making a national draft necessary and thereby forcing the same young people who blocked their doors to enter the military.

Despite this, the youth protesters in Seattle are very serious about their objective to stop recruitment on school campuses. They decry the amount of money spent on military programs at a time when funding for public education is being cut across the board.

On *Free Speech Radio*, youth activist Emily Reilly stated, "We came out to draw attention to the fact that there is decreasing money for education and human needs, but we are pouring billions of dollars into an immoral war."

"We are going into this summer with a lot of energy because that's one of the biggest times for recruiters to go out and recruit students into the military," Reilly continued. "And we're going to be out there every step of the way making sure that Seattle is a recruiter-free zone. We want to make their job impossible. We do not want anyone else to go over to Iraq from our city."

Excerpted from Alternet.org

For the latest updates, visit CounterRecruiter.net

What is this AMERICA

FOUR VOICES FROM THE HEART OF THE LAND

Citizen Without Borders CAMILO MEJIA

BY SUSAN CHENELLE

During a two-week furlough home from duty in Iraq, Staff Sgt. Camilo Mejia decided he could not go back. He was the first soldier to publicly refuse to return after serving in the Iraq war and to denounce the war as illegal and immoral. He turned himself into the military police and applied for Conscientious Objector status, but the U.S. military convicted him of desertion and sentenced him to one year in prison at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. He was released on February 15, 2005. Since then he has traveled around the country speaking out against the war and the occupation.

Though he served in the military for eight years, he has been called a coward; the specific charge levied against him was "desertion with the intent to avoid hazardous duty." In a statement from prison, he wrote, "I was a coward not for leaving the war, but for having been a part of it in the first place. I failed to fulfill my moral duty as a human being and instead I chose to fulfill my duty as a soldier. All because I was afraid. I was terrified, I did not want to stand up to the government and the Army, I was afraid of punishment and humiliation. I went to war because at the moment I was a coward, and for that I apologize to my soldiers for not being the type of leader I should have been."

"I was a coward not for leaving the war, but for having been a part of it in the first place."

—STAFF SGT. CAMILO MEJIA



KATHY KELLY An American Voice in the Wilderness

BY SUSAN CHENELLE

Many of us worry that the Bush administration's imperial foreign policy is ruining the rest of the world's perception of Americans. However, there are many U.S. citizens out there who are countering that damage and upholding what's left of our good name. Kathy Kelly, co-founder of Voices in the Wilderness, has spent almost ten years coordinating food and medicine convoys to Iraq and drawing attention to the devastating effects war and sanctions have had on the Iraqi people.

For bringing "medicine and toys" into Iraq, the U.S. government charged her and other VITW campaign members with violating the U.N./U.S. sanctions, and threatened them with twelve years in prison, and the organization with a penalty of \$163,000. A \$20,000 fine was eventually levied, but they have refused to pay it. In 1988, Kelly served nine months of a one-year sentence in a Lexington, Kentucky, maximum-security prison for planting corn on nuclear missile silo sites.

After seeing Iraqis with limbs blown off in hospitals — a form of "disarmament" she had not previously considered, she says — during her most recent trip to Iraq in January 2004, she decided that she "had a date with a couple military bases" when she returned to the U.S. In the spring of 2004, she spent three months in Pekin Federal Prison for crossing the line during a protest aimed at closing the facility commonly known as the "School of the Americas" or the "School of the Assassins" in Fort Benning, Georgia.

In a June 23 essay she published online, she quoted the line VITW used in a previous statement on why they remained in Baghdad during the 2003 invasion: "Where you stand determines what you see, and how you live." She and seven others have been doing "plenty of standing" in a two-week effort to make the United Nations Compensation Commission, scheduled to meet in Geneva, Switzerland, June 28-30, see what they have witnessed in Iraq: "people going to bed hungry in deteriorating homes, lacking access to clean water, exasperated and frightened by round after round of

violence, and bearing scorching temperatures that won't let up for another two months." They are demanding that the Commission "discuss justice for Iraqis" and to not "saddle the poorest Iraqis with billions of dollars of Saddam Hussein's debt" as well as war reparations.

The Independent caught up with her over the phone on day nine of the campaign's fifteen-day fast. When asked about the values that drive her and how she came by them, she explained that she "grew up in a setting where you didn't question the good fortune of being American and Catholic." Yet, she noted, that "some of her main role models in that environment were people who had no outward sign of the drive for the accumulation of wealth: nuns. They seemed happy and they were doing good work." That example planted "a seed of countercultural understanding" in her.

Back then she "knew very little of U.S. history of being anything other than benevolent." Now, she says she finds it "difficult to identify with any nation-state, but she feels a strong allegiance with the average, everyday, good-hearted, none-too-arrogant Americans you might meet going across the country. They're generous; they want to take care of their families; they are not war-like."

But by and large, she perceives that there isn't "a big investment among people" in enduring inconvenience in order to make things the way they should be. However, given that, she finds it "stunning that in the United States' relatively short history, there is the Civil Rights movement, the anti-war movement, the labor movement, all these intense movements that people all over the world identify with American culture. But now there seems to be a disinterest in the exercise of taking freedom, now at the point of being at our peril. I don't ever recall a time when I expected government leaders to be a help in that discussion."

She observes that "more comfortable people tend to burrow into themselves" and that many Americans "could take much more responsibility with far less risk than people in Latin American countries for example; it's just a matter of getting back into shape."

"Our country is called América!" AL GIORDANO

Inspired by the Zapatista uprising in Chiapas, Mexico, and fed up with the complacency of New York's wantering Downtown scene, Al Giordano went south of the border with no money and a dream. Founding *NarcoNews.com*, a Latin America-based news service, and an attached School of Authentic Journalism that now has hundreds of alumni reporting throughout the "Narcosphere."

By Jed Brandt

What is America?

Our credo at *Narco News* is a quote from General Simón Bolívar — the George Washington of South America — who said "*Nuestra patria se llama América!*" (The name of our country is América!) América, singular. The América with an accent. Let's start with an accent and work our way toward making our hemisphere a more dignified, and more fun, place to live. Every dance begins with a step.

Is the Southern border real?

Borders are false by their nature, meant to be crossed and broken. Northern Mexico along with Southern California-through-Texas has mutated into a kind of third country, a narco-state that nobody voted for, a militarized "free trade nightmare." When a buddy of mine got picked up by immigration authorities in Kansas City and shipped back to Mexico, well, I realized that Missouri is the border too.

The border is also a state of mind, one that at least 30 million folks born in Mexico but living in the United States have broken out of.

Will there be a USA in a hundred years?

The current situation is terrible. You notice it more starkly when you live outside of those borders, as I do, and come back infrequently. You can see that people are more frightened, more psychotic, more miserable, while insisting at louder volume that they are happy. This is equally true of red-state folks and blue-state folks, of right-wingers and left-wingers. It's a societal trend that goes across the board.

The American English language has four dominant verbs: to work, to buy, to sleep and to die. Hombre, everyone is on a friggin' treadmill up there, except for a small minority leisure class, which tends to be on its own special kind of hamster-wheel of neuroses.

As of 2000, there were already 35 million Latinos in the United States. Twenty million of them were Mexicans, millions more from every other country in the hemisphere. The open question for me is: Do these immigrants become like those in the previous waves, eager to slam the door shut behind them? Or does the United States, by cultural osmosis, become a less upright society, like Mexico?

Does Latin America have the same sense of "newness" that the North prides itself on? At this moment that I am responding to your questions, the Zapatistas are huddled in the highlands and jungles of Chiapas consulting their indigenous bases. Subcomandante Marcos, in a communiqué, wrote: "Ever since that dawn of the beginning of '94, we have dedicated our struggle — first with fire and then with the word — our efforts, our life and our death, exclusively to the Indian peoples of Mexico for the recognition of their rights and their culture. It was natural — we Zapatistas are overwhelmingly indigenous. Mayan indigenous, to be more precise... Now we are consulting with our heart in order to see if we are going to say and do something else..."

Like Diego Rivera's concept of great art, the Zapatista universality (indeed, their great revolutionaries) art to which we are all indebted) comes from having deep roots. They've always said they don't want the world to live like Mayan indigenous, that they just demand the right to be as they are, and they want other people elsewhere to fight for the right to be as they are: different, and, poetically, that's what makes us all the same. That's an example of how the "universal" springs from the native, or the local.

There is a lot of motion and effervescence and cross-pollination, experimentation, trial and error, constant analysis, constant action, even hyperaction. And yes, you are part of it in North America, and you'll all be happier and more hopeful (and more effective) when it dawns on radicals up there how your "New World" roots, your immigrant roots, make you part of Bolívar's "country called América" too, even while your government behaves like the same colonial powers that Americans, north and south, cast off centuries ago.

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"Some say, 'How can you not love your country?' It's a foreign concept to many, to probably a majority. Others say, 'How could you have ever loved it?'"

Do you identify as an American, in the usual northern sense?

Yes, I'm a gringo. I can't change that. But as a gringo I come from immigrant blood. And eight years ago I migrated South. I often get strange reactions when I say things like, "I don't love my country anymore." People react in one of two ways. Some say, "How can you not love your country?" It's a foreign concept to many, to probably a majority. Others say, "How could you have ever loved it?"

I feel a great nostalgic love for the New York that once was, but that is no more, for the city of immigrants where I was born, for the concepts of liberty, justice, democracy, a free press, an open society without fear. Of course, now most folks are afraid. The fear is what killed my city and my country.

It's that love for wild freedom and authentic democracy that led me to Latin America, where I find the desire is shared by most people, where people are willing to fight for it, and where I find that seems to be the missing element these days. This government is not responsive. It is not responsive legislatively; it is not responsible in the executive branch, and in the judicial it waffles. We all know what the outcome of that is: If they are not responsive, then the people have the right to rise up and change that government.

Why does the political right capture the flag so well?

Because the left doesn't contest them for it. Period. You've ceded it to those fuckers. United States radicals have to stop insisting on purity. At Zapatista gatherings, at every single one, they sing the friggin' national anthem! And they also sing their own Zapatista hymn. You can do both.

>> So you want me to salute the flag? Make it out of hemp. Print the First Amendment on it in English and Spanish, next to pictures of Chuck Berry and Woody Guthrie. And change 'one nation under God' to 'one nation under a groove.'>> —Steve Wishnia



'Making America Live up to its Promise'

LYNNE STEWART

Longtime radical New York attorney Lynne Stewart will be heading to court on September 23 for a sentencing hearing — not for a client, but for herself. In February a jury convicted her on five counts of conspiring to aid terrorists and lying to the government by smuggling out messages from her jailed client Sheikh Omar Abdel Rahman. It marked the first time that the federal government has prosecuted a defense attorney in a terrorism case. Stewart has maintained she was simply representing her client. She faces up to 30 years in prison, though the judge could choose to give her a more lenient sentence.

BY MIKE BURKE

What figures in American history inspire you and give you courage?

My epiphany as a movement person came when I was 22 years old and went to teach at a Harlem public school on 135th and Lenox. After my epiphany, it certainly became Harriet Tubman and John Brown who fought back against the system and actually the law as it was then constituted. They showed there was such a thing as morality. I would say those are my greatest heroes.

I have personal heroes too. Bill Kunstler, of course, was my dear friend, but also someone who never shirked from a case, never stepped back to take the easy way out. All of these people inspire me and are the true patriots, because to me in a democracy, you have to keep the power toeing the line in response to the people. The only way to do that is by having a critical mass — people who are critical and willing to speak out and to hold the government to the highest standard.

Of course you also must have a government that is responsive — that seems to be the missing element these days. This government is not responsive. It is not responsive legislatively; it is not responsible in the executive branch, and in the judicial it waffles. We all know what the outcome of that is: If they are not responsive, then the people have the right to rise up and change that government.

What does it mean to be a revolutionary in 2005?

I think it means at this point looking for basic change, change in the structures — somehow getting away from this corporatized America which, with its tremendous power and money, is able to control all the rest of us, the media and just about everything we do and say.

How do you define patriotism?

At the root of it all I think of those old lines that Paul Robeson sang, "The House I Live In." This is my America. I love this place. I grew up on a block where we played stickball in the spring and roller-skated in the summer. I want to have that place for my children and grandchildren. I

don't want them thinking of having to support the empire or to go off and fight evil wars or even to participate in the evil here at home, which is becoming a bigger and bigger issue. I think it really is about making America live up to its promise.

If we don't force the country to live up to that promise then we are not doing our duty as citizens, even when it is very hard. Even when it is much easier to lay back with the remote and the six-pack and not go to that meeting, not go to that demonstration, nor write the letter to the editor. It takes a certain amount of energy to be a democracy and I'd like to think that energizing is part of what I do and what I want to see done.

Can you talk about the significance of July 4th?

The Fourth of July is one of my favorite holidays because, of course, it celebrates the revolution — the right of people to self-determination. We need to remember that people do have the right to self-determination, to decide for themselves how they are going to be governed.

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I think it means at this point looking for basic change, change in the structures — somehow getting away from this corporatized America which, with its tremendous power and money, is able to control all the rest of us, the media and just about everything we do and say.

I think to be a revolutionary is to say let's get back to the grassroots, let's put the people back in charge, whatever that takes to do that, and to use Malcolm's old line — by any means necessary. The power has gone askew and we really need to make it come back to represent the people rather than the big guys.

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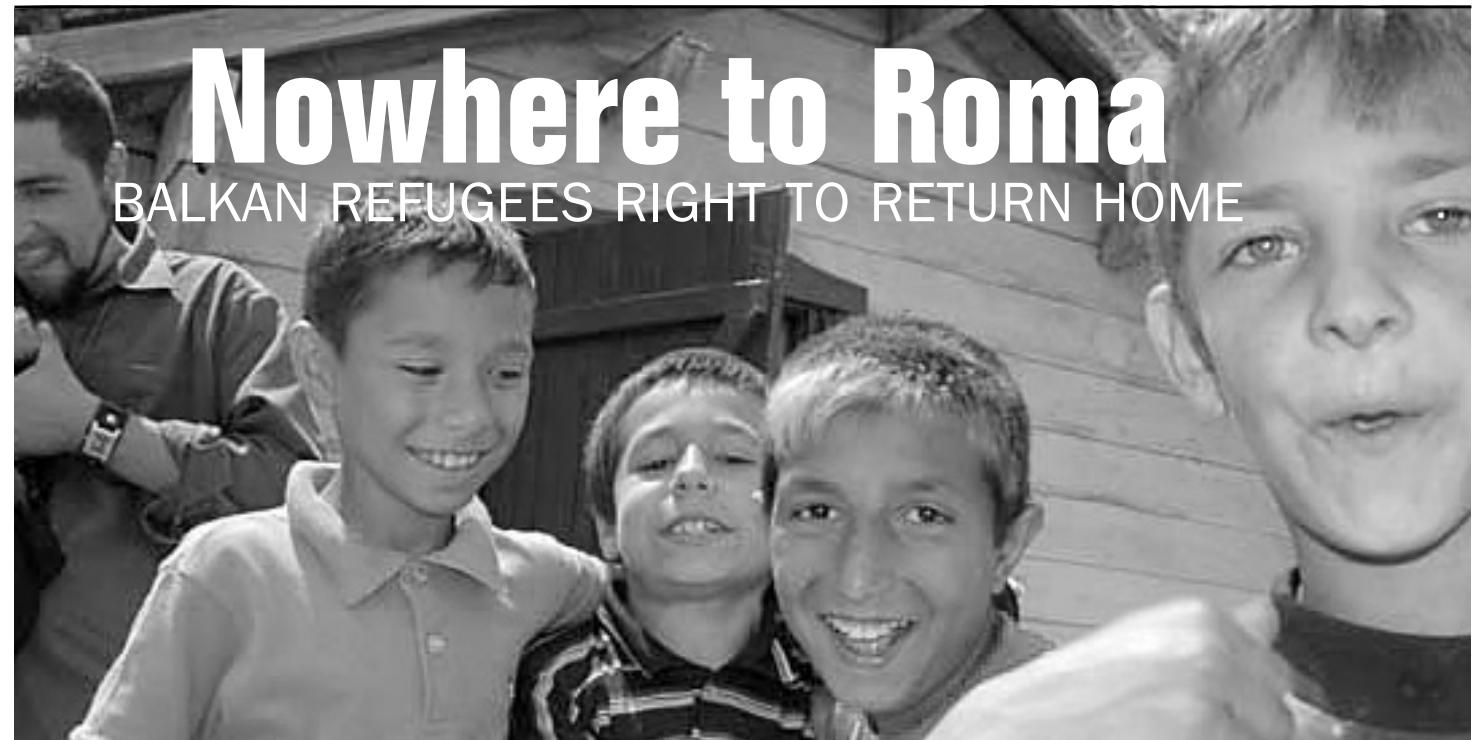
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Some 600 Roma refugees are living in camps in Kosovo, demanding that their community be rebuilt. Zitkovac, Kosovo. PHOTO: JACKSON ALLERS

BY JACKSON ALLERS

ZITKOVAC, KOSOVO — Along the way to one of three makeshift refugee camps inhabited by the Roma remnants of a former Yugoslav mining complex go on for more than two miles, the many slag heaps indicating a past of heavy lead smelting.

As the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) vehicle approaches the Zitkovac camp, Roma children run up to greet yet another set of visitors. Outside traffic to the camps has picked up in recent months, after reports by groups like Refugees International and the Kosovo Ombudsperson accused UNMIK and the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) of knowingly setting up the camps on land other U.N. agencies admit is heavily contaminated from the former mine activity.

At Zitkovac in particular, the World Health Organization reported in 2004 that the lead levels in the blood of the Roma children surpassed anything their instruments could read.

SIX YEARS IN EXILE

June 12 marked the six-year anniversary of the end of a U.S.-led NATO bombing campaign in Kosovo. The 78-day campaign ended the Serbian crackdown on Kosovo's independence-minded Albanian majority. Now, the Bush administration, through U.S. Undersecretary Nicholas Burns, and UNMIK's second-in-command Larry Rossin, is pushing the United Nations and the Albanian-led government to return Kosovo's refugee minority community, or internally displaced persons (IDPs). The Roma refugees were driven out in reprisal attacks by ethnic Albanians in 1999 and again in ethnically motivated rioting in 2004.

The successful return of displaced persons is a major condition placed on the majority Albanian government in order for status talks with the U.N. Mission, which serves as an interim government, to begin on autonomy. More often than not, "progress" refers to the return of approximately 100,000 displaced Serbians. But included in this group are more than 600 Roma living in the three camps established in 1999 — Zitkovac, Kablare and Chesminluk.

In May of this year, Burns spoke in front of the U.S. House International Relations Committee about the U.S. position with regards to the resolution of Kosovo's final status and the eight democratic benchmarks, or "standards," that Kosovo's Albanian leaders must fulfill to propel status discussions to the next phase.

"We seek to hasten the day when peace (in Kosovo) is self-sustaining and our troops can come home," he said. The United States has a 99-year lease on a large military base in Kosovo, with U.S. soldiers comprising

about 10 percent of the 18,000-plus NATO peacekeeping force. Burns insisted that Kosovo's final status must be based on the formation of a multi-ethnic society with full respect for human rights. This, according to Burns, included the right of all refugees and displaced persons to return to their homes safely.

But, as one local analyst put it, refugee returns do not apply to the Roma. Indeed, there is little evidence of a commitment to returning the Roma of Zitkovac to their homes.

TEMPORARY IS PERMANENT

In Zitkovac, containers that were supposed to serve as temporary shelters have melded into a shantytown, taking on a feeling of permanence, though UNHCR, which built the camp, admits it was not meant to exist for more than 90 days.

The 200 Roma living in Zitkovac represent a portion of the more than 8,000 Roma burned out of their "Mahalla," or community, in the nearby city of Mitrovica, as Serb security forces pulled out in June 1999. Local residents say that the 150-year-old settlement on the banks of the Ibar River — which separates the Serb-dominated northern part of Mitrovica and the southern, Albanian-dominated part — was burned by Albanians who viewed the Roma as "Serb collaborators."

Speaking on condition of anonymity, one former U.N. official, who worked with non-governmental organizations and the city of

>> Containers that were meant to serve as temporary shelters have melded into a shantytown, taking on a feeling of permanence.

Mitrovica to find a solution, said that without recent media attention, the Roma refugees in Zitkovac would simply be a casualty of the return process.

Habibi Hajnini agrees. He is the elected leader of the Roma group living in Zitkovac. After six years of living amid open sewage and rigged-up electrical lines, Hajnini says there has been little contact with international or Albanian officials about returning to the Mahalla.

"We heard there was an agreement with the municipal president of Mitrovica, Fajk Spahia, and the international community regarding the plan for a return to the Roma Mahalla," Hajnini said.

The plan Hajnini refers to is one worked out by U.N. Mission's Office of Returns and Communities, UNHCR, various NGOs and the Albanian-led municipality,

which would rebuild a section of the devastated remains of the Mahalla.

But as Hajnini puts it, "We were not present when they signed this agreement, and we actually didn't know about it until afterwards, and we still don't know what this plan is all about."

MAKING A STAND

The European Roma Rights Centre in Budapest, Hungary, has initiated a lawsuit against the U.N. Mission for its complicity in the poisoning of the Roma in Zitkovac. As early as November 2000, the Mission released a report recommending the immediate relocation of the three Roma camps. It also called for a continuous education program and financial support for the eradication of lead poisoning.

When asked why the U.N. Mission failed to act on its own recommendations to move the camps in 2000, spokesperson Neeraj Singh said, "Despite all of our appeals to the Roma to actually move out of there, they have very unequivocally stated that they would only return to the Roma Mahalla."

A legal watchdog in the province, Marek Antoni Nowicki, said that the Roma were aware of the health risks to their families, but he said, "In their understanding, in order to have a chance to go back to their point of origin — in this case, the Mahalla, which is their international right as refugees — and in order to keep this Mahalla question on a proper level politically, they feel they have to make a stand."

A first-ever conference to raise money to rebuild the Mahalla was organized for the first time in April. Again, representatives of the Mahalla were not invited to attend. Complicating matters, the German government has made arrangements with the U.N. and local Kosovo authorities to forcibly return over 10,000 Roma who sought asylum there after the Kosovo conflict in 1999.

The problem, according to U.N. sources, is that there are few municipalities which will accept the Roma population.

In his visit to Kosovo in June, Undersecretary of State Burns said that status discussions should take place later this year if the Kosovo leadership continues its progress toward building a multi-ethnic Kosovo. "It is very important that the Kosovo Albanian majority stand up clearly and say that people who left Kosovo for whatever reasons have the right to come back here," he said, adding, "that sense of tolerance has to be at the heart of any political settlement in Kosovo."

Meanwhile, children in the Zitkovac continue to get sick. According to the former U.N. official, the best thing for the 150-year-old Roma community is to leave Kosovo altogether. "The problem is no country is willing to accept this group of people."

Red Alert in Chiapas

BY KAZEMBE BULAGOON

The Zapatistas issued a "red alert" June 19 calling for strategic consultations between the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN) and the civilian leadership of Chiapas' autonomous municipalities. Rebel civilian leaders immediately went underground, and international solidarity activists were warned to "leave rebel territory, or, if they decide freely of their own volition, they remain on their own and at their own risk."

According to a communiqué issued by the Zapatista military command, the red alert is a "precautionary defensive measure." The red alert came in response to Mexican military accusations of marijuana farms in Zapatista communities. The reports were false, but observers saw the charge as a possible pretext for an attack. In May, the bank accounts of Enlace Civil, the main EZLN solidarity committee, were frozen by the Mexican government.

"Now we shall decide whether we are going to do something else, and we will make the results public at the proper time. We are now making clear – in order to end the speculations – that this 'other thing' does not entail any offensive military action on our part... Ever since February-March of 1994 our entire military presence has been, and is, defensive," wrote Subcomandante Marcos, the symbolic masked leader of the EZLN.

In a joint statement, observers with Estacion Libre, a people-of-color solidarity committee, and the Mexico-based La Red Defensores reported no immediate signs of military escalation.

In 1994, the EZLN catapulted to world consciousness when they led an indigenous rebellion in Chiapas against the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), which threatened to displace thousands of campesinos from their land. The rebellion became a global rallying call against free trade agreements, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Autonomous communities have been created in Chiapas and have been able to create a parallel power structure to the official government, running schools, health care clinics and farming cooperatives.

In the 11 years since the uprising against globalization and for land reform, major changes have taken place in the rebel communities.

The paramilitary structure of the EZLN leadership has been replaced on the ground by "caracoles" (Spanish for sea shell)

or "good government assemblies." Caracoles rotate responsibilities and are meant to provide direct government in the autonomous communities. The formation of the Caracoles involved a major pullback by the EZLN, which has relinquished most of its military roles. In the most recent communiqué, Marcos indicates that this may be the last of the EZLN. "Now we are consulting with our heart in order to see if we are going to say and do something else."

On June 28th, a dozen Zapatista supporters gathered at Tompkins Square Park to discuss the red alert and possible solidarity actions. On June 29, the EZLN announced that the conselatas had concluded and "the EZLN shall undertake a new political initiative that is national and international in nature." These initiatives will be explained in a series of text that will be part of the "Sixth Declaration of Selva Lacandona."

For up to the minute reports, see chiapas.indymedia.org



U.S. TROOPS TURN THE GUNS AROUND

Hazardous Duty in Iraq

The alleged killing of two U.S. Army officers in Iraq on June 7 by Staff Sgt. Alberto B. Martinez of Troy, New York is creating fear among some and hope among others that the mighty U.S. war machine is disintegrating, dredging up comparisons to the Vietnam War.

BY A.K. GUPTA

No one, except perhaps the Pentagon, knows precisely how many military personnel were dispatched by disgruntled GIs in Vietnam, but the problem was so pervasive that in 1971 military historian Col. Robert D. Heinl Jr. wrote in the official *Armed Forces Journal*, "fragging" is current soldier slang in Vietnam for the murder or attempted murder of strict, unpopular, or just aggressive officers and NCOs [Non Commissioned Officers].... Word of the deaths of officers will bring cheers at troop movies or in bivouacs of certain units."

According to historian Gabriel Kolko, author of *Anatomy of a War* (perhaps the single best study of the Vietnam War), there were a minimum of 788 officially confirmed cases of fragging from 1969 to 1972, resulting in 86 deaths. Another historian, Terry Anderson, contends, "The U.S. Army itself does not know exactly how many... officers were murdered. But they know at least 600 were murdered, and then they have another 1,400 that died mysteriously." He adds that by 1970 the army was "at war... with itself."

Fragging was the most obvious sign that the U.S. military was disintegrating. Heinl noted that, "The armed forces still in Vietnam are on the brink of collapse. Separate

units avoid or refuse battle, kill their officers, are full of drugs and are without enthusiasm when not on the verge of mutiny."

By the early 1970s, rebellious grunts crippled the U.S. military not just in Vietnam but worldwide. A congressional inquiry uncovered "literally hundreds of instances of damage to naval property wherein sabotage is suspected." This included acts that took entire warships out of action. Mutiny even spread to U.S. Air Force pilots, the elite of the elite. In Vietnam, pilots diverted missions, failed to show up to protect bombing runs and even refused orders.

Today, the Pentagon is haunted by the spectre of another guerrilla war without end. While the alleged fragging incident by Martinez is only the second case in Iraq, it also appears to signal a breakdown in the armed forces.

After completing a recent trip to Iraq where he visited with U.S. and Iraqi army units, Retired Gen. Barry McCaffrey warned, "We are getting toward the end of our capacity... The U.S. Army and Marine Corps are incapable of sustaining the effort. Our recruiting is coming apart. The National Guard is going to unravel."

The unraveling includes recruitment rates that have fallen by as much as 40 percent; reports that 5,500 U.S. military personnel

have deserted since the start of the Iraq war; the mutiny by an army reserve transportation unit in October 2004, which disobeyed orders to undertake a supply mission they called "suicidal;" and in the same month the refusal of an Iraq-bound national guard platoon in Mississippi to conduct training as a protest against conditions at their facility, Camp Shelby.

Another recent incident points to the breakdown in discipline and command. On June 20, a military hearing was conducted at Fort Sill, Oklahoma for Sgt. David Freyaldenhoven who has admitted to killing Staff Sgt. Terry Robbins while arguing over alcohol last Feb. 10 at Camp Taji, just north of Baghdad. Freyaldenhoven claims self-defense. According to witnesses at the hearing, Robbins had a tendency to pull his gun "during card games and arguments at camp," as well as threatening to "shoot the Iraqis they were training if they didn't listen or perform better."

The episode reveals that despite Robbins's violent temperament he was left on duty. Also, the Pentagon forbids alcohol in war zones, but according to a report in the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*, Capt. John Vanlandingham, "testified that alcohol was easy to find at Camp Taji. 'Oh, yeah, everybody knew you could get alcohol,' he told the court by telephone."

The backdoor draft aside, these breakdowns in military discipline are happening in a volunteer army, which is more ominous than discontent among draftees. With casualty rates increasing once again among U.S. forces, it seems certain that the military machine will continue to fall apart.

This is probably causing nightmares for the Pentagon brass, but at least it's the silver lining of the Iraq war – a mutinous army is only a danger to itself.

IN BRIEF

FROM MARKETING CDS AND CARS TO MARKETING DEATH

The Pentagon has joined with a private marketing company to create a massive database of high school and college students to target potential recruits. So far, the database has 30 million names and includes birth dates, social security numbers, ethnicity, grade-point averages, address and telephone information, and areas of study. The private firm working with the Pentagon, BeNOW, has previously worked on marketing databases for Tower Records and Saab.

ITALY TO U.S.: YOU CAN'T CARRY OUT KIDNAPPINGS ON OUR SOIL

An Italian judge has issued arrest warrants for 13 CIA agents accused of kidnapping a Muslim cleric off the streets of Milan in 2003. The cleric has never been seen again. He is believed to be in Egypt where he has reportedly been tortured. U.S. agents are also under investigation in Germany and Sweden for carrying out similar kidnappings.

RUMSFELD WARNS OF UP TO 12 MORE YEARS IN IRAQ

Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld has admitted it could take up to 12 more years to quell the resistance in Iraq. He said on June 27, "That insurgency could go on for any number of years. Insurgencies tend to go on five, six, eight, 10, 12 years." (Before the war he told NPR, "I can't say if the use of force would last five days or five weeks or five months, but it certainly isn't going to last any longer than that.") The fighting in Iraq shows no signs of slowing down. At least 1,350 people have been killed since the formation of the new Iraqi government on April 28. And the CIA has warned that Iraq is now serving as a real-world laboratory for urban combat for Islamic militants.

ISRAELI SOLDIER CONVICTED IN DEATH OF PEACE ACTIVIST

An Israeli military tribunal has convicted a former IDF soldier of manslaughter in the shooting death of Tom Hurndall. The 21-year-old peace activist was shot in Gaza in April 2003 – less than a month after an Israeli military bulldozer ran over and killed 23-year-old Rachel Corrie, of Olympia Washington. Hurndall died last year after nine months in a coma. Meanwhile, in defiance of international law, the Israel government has resumed carrying out assassinations of Palestinians.

SADDAM TO RONNIE: I MISS YOU

GQ reports that former Iraqi President Saddam Hussein has told his guards that he misses the good ol' days when the United States was secretly helping arm Iraq. He said, "I wish things were like when Ronald Reagan was still president." Meanwhile Iraq's Justice Minister has accused the United States of trying to delay Iraqi efforts to interrogate Hussein in order to hide secrets about former ties between Washington and Baghdad.

SHORT HITS:

On June 26, South African marked the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Freedom Charter that declared "South Africa belongs to all people who live in it, black and white." ... British Armed Forces Minister Adam Ingram has revealed that the U.S. dropped 30 napalm-type firebombs in Iraq in 2003... The Bush administration rejected an extradition request from Venezuela for CIA-trained, Cuban-born Luis Posada Carriles to be tried for his role in a 1976 airliner bombing that killed 73 people.

Better Than Real: Hip-Hop Lit

By Kazembe Bulagoon

Ever since Slick Rick dropped “A Children’s Story,” hip-hop has been a story-telling form, telling tall tales while “keeping it real.” This is a truth not lost on hip-hop activist turned novelist Sofia Quintero. Writing under the pen name Black Artemis, her second novel *Picture Me Rollin’* reclaims the insurgent radical politics once common in hip-hop. It’s no small task cutting against the current flood of crass commercialism and misogyny in big media hip-hop, but self-confessed “bona fide hip-hop purist” Quintero considers herself up to the challenge.

An Afro-Latina raised in the Soundview section in the Bronx, her first memories were of her brother sneaking out to golden age hip-hop parties at Morris High School.

Instead of becoming an MC, she decided to study public policy at Columbia University until she went through a “creative recovery.”

After writing a number of screenplays, Quintero turned to the creative nuance of fiction. Her first novel, *Explicit Content*, examines the challenges of sisterhood in the face of hip-hop capitalism. In *Picture Me Rollin’* her main character’s obsession over Tupac Shakur serves as a meditation on the current crisis in hip-hop. For Quintero, hip-hop, like Shakur, is at a crossroads. “There are many contradictory impulses in hip-hop between revolution and being a gangsta. While trying to be a ‘revolutionary but gangsta’ is desirable, we can’t go both ways” Quintero told *The Indypendent*.

The pop-novel form has also been a means of broadening socialist and feminist ideas to new audience.



SOFIA QUINTERO in front of a De La Vega mural in East Harlem. PHOTO: IRINA IVANOVA

However, Quintero is quick to make a distinction between her work and the real-street-life literature by writers like Iceberg Slim and Zane. “Just because it’s urban, doesn’t necessarily mean it’s hip-hop.” Still, she does share the DIY spirit of her

street life counterparts.

Quintero is taking her book tour to alternative and people-of-color spots across the country, while organizing Chica Luna Productions, a women’s artist collaborative. In writing novels, she

hopes to spark dialogue about the direction of an art form so integral to her development. “I don’t want to forget that hip-hop comes out of the experiences of the children of the damned. We need to reconnect and pick up that struggle.”

Highlights of the Human Rights Film Fest

Heavy Ceilings & Love Ties

By Diane Mason

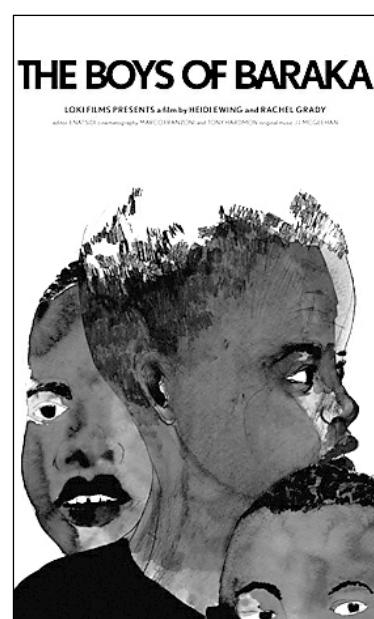
The 2005 Human Rights Watch International Film Festival, co-presented in New York in June by the Film Society of Lincoln Center, screened 26 films and videos from 20 countries that tackle some of the most important human rights and political stories of our times including; “the war on terror,” the struggle for children’s rights, and the inequities wrought by globalization.

THE LIBERACE OF BAGHDAD

The UK video *The Liberace of Bagdad*, while not an important work, is of interest because it provides a glimpse of Iraq from the point of view of an Iraqi, a once-famous pianist reduced to playing in a hotel lounge for clusters of contractors. Initially, he speaks obsessively about his lifelong amours. As the situation around him deteriorates, he fears being killed and misses his wife who went to America. He’ll probably emigrate too though he’s reluctant to abandon a daughter who won’t leave. Lying in his hotel basement bed - it’s too dangerous to drive home after hours - he says he fears the ceiling will fall one night and crush him, because it’s so heavy.

THE BOYS OF BARAKA

In the riveting feature length documentary film *The Boys of Baraka*, opening at the Film Forum in the Fall, we’re taken to Baltimore and the grimmest of slums, where children come into the world long after the heaviest of ceilings had fallen, crushed preceding generations and are certain to claim them too, absent the occasional miracle. Here, the heavy ceiling is the history of the African in America, where the institution of slavery ranked with the worst such practices known.



One miraculous intervention in the lives of 20 boys each year since the mid-90s was the conceptually sophisticated Baraka School, situated in the lush countryside of Kenya. Here, they were boarded and educated for two years to give them a shot at living functional, gratifying lives. Among other skills, they were taught how to deal effectively with conflict. When the school is suddenly shut down because of political and economic fallout from 9/11, some of the boys who’d completed only half the course are sufficiently prepared to survive the mean streets, while others are not. This beautifully architected film focuses on three boys from the last group sent to Kenya and sensitively highlights key facets of their stories. It makes clear that people caught in terrible conditions don’t choose to be there but are tripped up by layers of overwhelming circumstances and their very humanity. And it underscores the critical importance of love ties, of how profoundly children are affected by a father in prison or a mother possessed by drugs even though they may receive the tough love of another parent or the care of a gentle grandmother.

THE EDUCATION OF SHELBY KNOX

Speaking of love ties, the equally riveting *The Education of Shelby*

Knox is, in the end, about just that, but in privileged circumstances. Yes, it’s about a strong-minded 15-year-old with an extraordinary gift for thinking for herself on subjects that are taboo in the conservative Southern Baptist, Republican



environment of Lubbock, Texas – where there’s nothing for teens to do but hang out in parking lots and have sex. But all of us are born with gifts. The trick is getting that portion of sunshine, rain and fertilizer that allows those gifts to emerge and flower. What did it for Shelby were two dyed in the wool conservatives who were the best parents imaginable, in the solid middle-class environment their own backgrounds enabled them to provide. Shelby takes a vow not to have sex before marriage, but understands the need for sex education in the schools for the many teens who will

have sex. She trusts her sense that homosexuality is natural, and understands that who controls the purse determines policy.

STATE OF FEAR

The USA/Peruvian entry *State of Fear*, opening at the Film Forum on January 25, 2006, is a powerful documentary which damns both houses that, in battling one another, annihilated thousands of Peruvians since 1970: that of the egregiously privileged descendants of the conquistadores and their ilk, who constitute the government and run the military; and, on the other hand, the Shining Path revolutionary movement, in a bitter response to intolerable circumstances. Finally the film damns the regime of Alberto Fujimori which used “terrorism” as an excuse to militarize the state.

OCCUPATION DREAMLAND

A repetitive, but valuable video record *Operation Dreamland* registers the thinking of many American soldiers stationed in Falluja before the U.S. military demolished it. While some echo the administration’s line, most get what’s really going on. At a recruitment meeting, they’re nastily reminded of how bleak their futures look, so they’d better re-enlist.

The Romance of Fucking

By Amy Wolf

In the last issue, I closed with the term "Docurotica," leaving some readers with ingrained images of Andy Rooney getting a rim job from Mike Wallace.

You will be relieved to know that I am not going there.

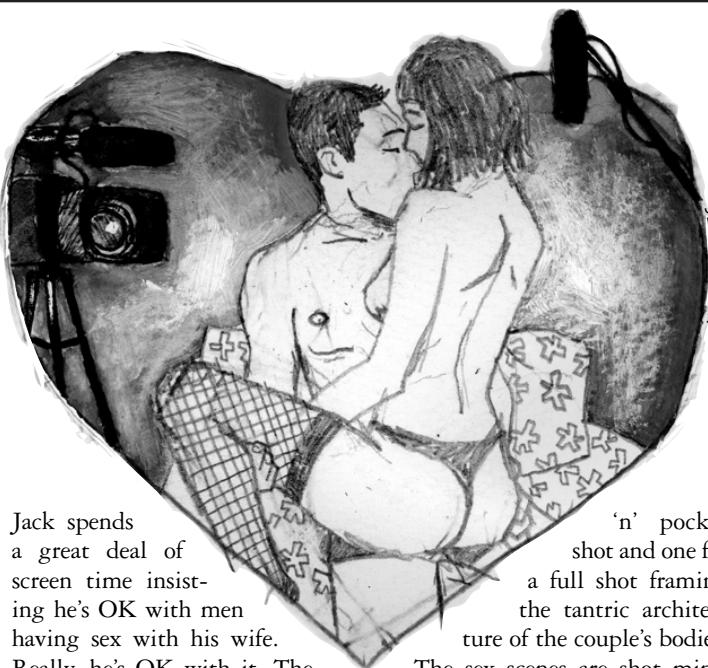
The act of classification, however old school and taxidermistic, facilitates understanding, and we've got a new species of sex film to investigate. The vast majority of "pornography" arguably entails a derogatory and demeaning depiction of women, is tailored to the solitary male gaze and represents sex as a perverse and purely physical act. Sex-positive pioneers have worked for years to combat these dangerous attitudes toward sex and reclaim this natural and beautiful gift that keeps on giving.

Comstock Films has managed to break into new filmic territory

by refocusing on the intense emotional bonds that fuel physical intimacy. The films empower couples to reclaim the right to engage, enjoy and watch hot, raunchy sex. Xana, of *Xana and Dax: Opposites Attract*, confesses while sweetly grinning to her lover, "It's very romantic just to fuck."

Tony Comstock seeks to infiltrate the minds of even the most conservative couple who are one step above doing "it" through a hole in the bedsheet. Consequently, he features couples that have traditional, often nuptial, home and sex lives. Although Comstock works with demographically diverse couples, all relationships are rooted in good-old monogamy and fairytale notions of true love.

The stylistic quality of Comstock's four docurotic films has progressed from the first, *Marie & Jack: A Hard Core Love Story*. Investigating the backstage lives of two established porn stars,



Jack spends a great deal of screen time insisting he's OK with men having sex with his wife. Really, he's OK with it. The narrative construction of all of Comstock's films are as predictable as, well, sex. OK, a date and then sex.

The films begin with warming and giddy stories of the how-we-first-met variety. Puppy-dog eyes and tales of "breasts are so comforting, they're like my natural pillows," and cocks that "hang just right," are syncopated with bursts of footage of the couple nibbling nipples or engrossed in doggy-style variation three. Splicing sex and foreplay within their close-up interviews leads the viewer into an emotional and erotic intimacy unparalleled in porn.

At some point, as with most good dates, the talking stops. The filming of the sex scene utilizes two cameras, one for a straight ball

'n' pocket shot and one for a full shot framing the tantric architecture of the couple's bodies.

The sex scenes are shot minimally with the thwacking bodies, groans and genuine orgasms providing the only soundtrack. The lighting and location are reminiscent of an Ikea showroom, stripped of detail to emphasize the universality of the act.

Sex doesn't have to be bad, and neither do sex films. In the early 70s, porno movies were part of a larger social struggle against shame. The proliferation of porn stemmed from a Supreme Court ruling that clarified nudity as not obscene. Tony Comstock cannot fix or undo porno, but he will continue making movies until everyone, even your great aunt on oxygen and your fourth-grade teacher, are having copious amounts of good sex — and not feeling ashamed.

THE Ⓛ STRING

Noise on the Border: Narcocorridos & Cumbia Dub

BY STEVE WISHNIA

I'm driving through the desert in Coahuila, Mexico, with my friend Ioni from Austin, listening to Los Tigres del Norte's double CD *Jefe de Jefes*. "Los Tigres. Good music," says a clerk in the music store in Ciudad Acuna. The music feels like it grows directly out of the land, the accordion riffing around the spiky yucca, the bajo sexto (12-string bass guitar) waltzing with the mesquite and purple sage. And it's easy to imagine that the men sweating tar on the road crew have cousins who miss Mexico even though they're making hundreds of dollars a month in the fields of Arizona or the factories of New York, like the "well-off wetback" of Los Tigres' "El Mojado Acaudalado."

This sense of the connection between music and place continues after we cross the border where the Department of Vaterland Security searches our car for *hierba*. ("Tell me, who certifies los Estados Unidos?" Los Tigres sing.) Bobby Blue Bland's Houston blues are the perfect soundtrack for passing the cotton fields of South Texas, Roky Erickson's garage psychedelia for cruising the neon boulevards of

South Austin.

The miracle of music is that it can reach anyone from anywhere, but people who come from the same place and culture are still going to feel special ties to it. A Jamaican who grew up playing "police and thieves" instead of cops and robbers is going to feel more resonances with Junior Murvin's reggae classic than will a punk-rocker who learned the song from the Clash. And to an old New York punk-rocker, the Ramones, Johnny Thunders and Patti Smith are always going to sound like home.

I loved hearing soul music on the radio when I was in junior high on Long Island, but I didn't really get it until I moved back to the city and danced to Aretha Franklin's "Rock Steady" and Manu Dibango's "Soul Makossa" at house parties. I drank my way through a divorce with a Hank Williams double CD, but country music didn't really click into context until I was driving through Arkansas with a Steve Earle tune twanging out of the radio.

This works the other way too. I loved hearing ranchera music on the radio in New Mexico, but back in New York, its polka rhythms seemed corny. When I



SAM QUINONES

did a video with a North Carolina singer-songwriter a few years ago, the music sounded perfect up in the Appalachians; back in the city, it still sounded good, but it also felt like it was severely lacking Afro-American DNA. (One of the other musicians on that tape was harmonica virtuoso Eddie Gordon, who played on the theme to *Sesame Street*. Gordon, an avid pothead, claims that Jim Henson was "being green" when he conceived the character of Kermit the Frog.)

Anyway, all this ultimately means that there's good globalization and bad globalization of music. Good globalization means that people can hear vital and unique music from anywhere in the world; bad globalization wants everyone buying the same ten corporate megastars. Good globalization creates exciting cross-cultural hybrids: Celso Piña's 2001 Mexican hit "Cumbia Sobre el

Rio," based on the Colombian rhythm that has spread as far as Buenos Aires and Jackson Heights, mixes in dancehall-style vocalizing, while his "Cumbia Poder" lifts the "weya-weya-weya" chorus from an old Manu Dibango tune, itself a Cameroonian crossover. Bad globalization obliterates local scenes, reducing local styles to an "exotic" flavoring on top of vapid, homogenized product.

DESPEDIDA: Traditional Mexican corridos end with a *despedida*, a farewell verse. The one in Manuel C. Valdez y Juan González's "Por Morfina y Cocaína," a 1934 prisoner's lament that may be the first recorded narcocorrido, begins with "El corrido aquí se acaba/ya no quiero atormentar/cuando se estarán deseando/que termine de cantar." Translation: "The ballad ends here/I no longer want to torment you/when you are probably wishing/that I would stop singing."

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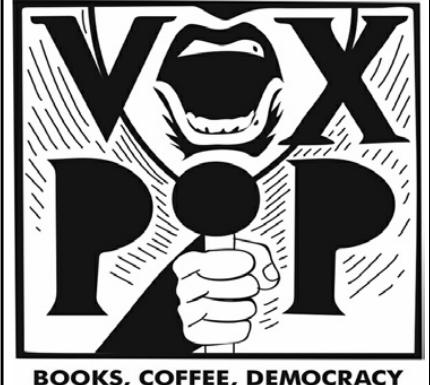
bluestockings.com

SUNDAY, JULY 10 @ 2:30PM • FREE
FEMINIST BOOK CLUB: This month's book: *Communion: The Female Search for Love* by Bell Hooks. Open to all.

MONDAY, JULY 18 @ 7PM • FREE
AN EVENING WITH AL BURIAN AND JESSICA HOPPER. Al Burian is a writer, musician and the creator of the popular fanzine *Burn Collector*. Jessica Hopper is a Chicago-based feminist music and culture critic for *Punk Planet* and the creator of the fanzine *Hit it or Quit it*.

TUESDAY, JULY 19 @ 7PM • FREE
READING: *Bending* with author Greta Christina
Bending is part of a three-novella erotic collection, *Three Kinds of Asking For It*, edited by Susie Bright.

WEDNESDAY JULY 20 @ 7PM • FREE
SPAZZES WITH GLASSES:
Book Nerd Tour Summer 2005
Featuring Anne Elizabeth Moore and Liz Mason; and joined in NYC by Jacinta Bunnell, creator of *Girls Will Be Boys* coloring books.



VOXPONET.NET

MONDAY JULY 4 • 6:00pm
\$5 sliding scale.
4TH OF JULY FUNNIES

Before you head out to the fireworks, join us for an evening of live music and comedy. Performers include Sudden Death, and Joshua Grosvent, a musical comedian. Additional performers to be announced.

TUES. JULY 5, • 7:30pm
INVENTOS: HIP HOP CUBANO DOCUMENTARY

FRI. JULY 8 • DOORS OPEN 5:45am
AIR AMERICA'S MORNING SEDITION WILL BROADCAST THEIR SHOW LIVE from our café on the morning of July 8! Start time is 6am. Get here early! The first few people through the door will receive free giveaways! See: shows.airamericanradio.com/ms/

FRI. JULY 8 • 8:00pm

Free
BROOKLYN WRITERS AT VOX POP Poetry Reading: Join us for readings by local poets Pui Wong, Norman Stock, and Tim Suermond.

MON. 11 JULY • 8:30pm
RICHARD THORNE, singer/songwriter Acoustic, roots, Americana sound that has hints of non-traditional bluegrass and old-timey country, all blended together with catchy alternative folk pop melodies and intelligent, clever, and in some cases, narrative, lyrics.

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has open meetings every Tuesday at 7pm at 34 E. 29th St., 2nd floor. Call for more info: 212.684.8112

OTHER NYC INDYMEDIA GROUPS

Open to the public (That means YOU!)
PHOTO TEAM: 7pm MONDAYS
VIDEO TEAM: 7pm TUESDAYS

THU JUNE 30

12:00 Noon • FREE
COME JOIN IMMIGRANT YOUTH TO RALLY IN SUPPORT OF THE DREAM ACT
This event is in honor of immigrant students who are now at risk of being deported. The DREAM Act in the Senate and the Student Adjustment Act in the House are bills that would remove barriers to education and provide a path toward legal residency for U.S.-raised immigrant students who lack legal immigration status.
Thomas Paine Park @ Worth and Lafayette (near Broadway and Lafayette stop)

9am – 5pm • FREE
PIPELINE PROTEST Environmental Education and Solidarity Event. All Ages: Join us to raise awareness of and protest Credit Suisse First Boston's involvement in destructive oil project Sakhalin-2
Madison Square Park (24th & Madison Ave.)
www.dirtymoney.org

10pm • \$5
HOT TUB: QUALITY IMPROV COMEDY
a wet jubilee with Todd Barry, Paul Scheer, Miss Ruby Valentine and others.
The PIT, 154 W. 29th St.
www.thepit-nyc.com for reservations

FRI JULY 1

12 noon • FREE
HELP US LAUNCH THE CAMPAIGN TO TAKE BACK OUR RENT LAWS. We demand the repeal of the notorious Urstadt Law, which prevents the New York City Council and Mayor from enacting stronger tenant protections and reversing the phaseout of rent stabilization and rent control.
Battery Park, Battery Pl. (at Broadway)
Sponsored by:
Tenants & Neighbors, Met Council on Housing Coalition for the Homeless

SAT JULY 2

9am – 4pm • FREE
13TH ANNUAL CYCLE MESSENGER WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS: MAIN RACE
Events will be going on from June 24th to July 4th, but this is the main event! Since 1993 in Berlin, the bike messengers of the world gather every year for a weekend of splendid mayhem. a world-class sporting event!
Jersey City, New Jersey
www.hbma.com/cmwc2005

SUN JULY 3

9pm – 12am • FREE
FILM NIGHT @ Cycle Messenger World Championships
Riverside Park @ 105th St., Manhattan

MON JULY 4

10:00am–Noon • FREE
PROTEST TO CLOSE GUANTANAMO DETENTION CENTER
Join Eve Ensler, Gloria Steinem, Center for Constitutional Rights, Code Pink, the Culture Project, Not in Our Name, United for Peace and Justice, and WEDO
34th St. and 6th Ave.

3pm • FREE
BILL OF RIGHTS AGAINST CORPORATE TYRANNY DIRECT ACTION
Join us to unfurl a modern-day Bill of Rights to protect America and its citizens from the perils of corporate tyranny. Then join us at: East River Bar. (97 South 6th St. btw. Bedford & Berry, Williamsburg Brooklyn) Steps of Federal Hall 26 Wall Street at Nassau St. • www.greendragon.org

JULY 4 CONTINUED . . .

8:00pm—Midnight • \$20
SOME FOLKS CALL IT UN-AMERICAN— ROOFTOP FILMS EXPLOSIVE POLITICAL FILMS, FIREWORKS VIEWING AND LIVE MUSIC
The Films: America's Biggest Dick (Brian Boyce / 3:00) All That I Can Be (Educational Video Center / 8:00) The Stork (Nina Paley, 4:30) There There Square (Jacqueline Goss / 14:00) Something Other Than Other (Jerry Henry / 7:05) Pizza Surveillance Feature (Micah Laaker, American Civil Liberties Union / 2:20) World On Fire (Sophie Muller / 4:20) Buried in the Backyard (Sarah Prior & Monica Bigler / New York, NY / 30:00) El Moro (Jim Finn / 3:00) System Failure (WITNESS / 8:00) A Girl Named Kai (Kai Ling Xue / 8:00) Luckiest Nut in the World (Emily James, Fulcrum TV / 5:30) Hot Dog Man (Joyce Ventimiglia & Jim Haverkamp / 5:45)
On the roof of the Fulton Mall Parking Garage, 300 Livingston St. in Downtown Brooklyn. Dress warmly, Rain - same location, www.rooftopfilms.com

10am – 12 noon • FREE
DIRECT ACTION
A street action calling for the shutdown of Guantanamo, including readings from testimonials by detainees, their families, and their lawyers.
34th Street and 6th Ave., Herald Square, New York, NY
SUGGESTED ATTIRE: Pink Statue of Liberty Gowns & Crowns; Orange Prison Jumpsuits or Black Hoods & Capes of Detainees; Red, White & Blue for Freedom & Justice; or street clothes with Orange Armbands.

6:00 pm • FREE
LADIES' BICYCLE REPAIR NIGHT
49 E. Houston St. (between Mott and Mulberry)

6:30 – 8:30pm • FREE
PETE HAMILL IN CONVERSATION WITH DAVID GONZALEZ: CASASOLA
Museo del Barrio, 1230 Fifth Ave. (@ 104th St.)
6pm • \$10 Adults • \$5 for Students
EXPERT GALLERY TALK
Pioneering Modern Painting: Cézanne and Pissarro 1865-1885. Linda Nochlin, Lila Acheson Wallace Professor of Modern Art Institute of Fine Arts, New York University 11 West 53 St.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR JUNE – JULY

THU JULY 7

6pm and 9pm (two events)
PRINT SALE, SCREENINGS TO CELEBRATE THE LAUNCHING OF *RIFF RAG* – a queer feminist magazine committed to fighting white supremacy, promoting accessibility to art and building alliances across boundaries.
Jigsaw 526 E. 11th St. (A & B) 212.777.7845

9pm • FREE
RIFF RAG RELEASE PARTY
Dancers & Djs, Open Bar 9 – 10
@ Girlsroom 210 Rivington St. (Pitt & Ridge) 212.995.8684

6 – 9pm • FREE
CONCERT SERIES: SUMMER NIGHTS AT EL MUSEO DEL BARRIO
El Museo del Barrio Heckscher Building 1230 Fifth Ave. (@ 104th St.) Every Thursday

FRI JULY 8

3:30pm – Noon • FREE
CLOTHING SWAP, PRESS CONFERENCE AND PARTY
Parents with children's clothes to give away, and parents who need clothes for their children, are invited to our children's clothing swap and garden Tea party.
5:30pm PRESS CONFERENCE, 6pm – Midnight HOUSE & GARDEN PARTY FOR GLORIA MATTERA: Meet independent candidate for Brooklyn Borough President, Gloria Mattera. East New York Green Tea House 300 Logan Street, Brooklyn (btw. Atlantic & Liberty Aves.) 646-549-1615

6am • FREE
AIR AMERICA'S MORNING SEDITION AT VOX POP
Broadcasting their show LIVE from our café on the morning of July 8! Doors open 5:45am, start time is 6am. Free giveaways! [shows.airamericaradio.com/ms/](http://www.airamericaradio.com/ms/)

6:15pm • FREE
PROSPECT PARK TRAFFIC-CALMING RIDE
Meet at the Grand Army Plaza entrance.
www.times-up.org

SAT JULY 9

9pm • FREE
PROSPECT PARK MOONLIGHT RIDE
Meet on your bike at Grand Army Pz, Brooklyn.
www.times-up.org

4:30–9:00pm • Sliding scale \$10, 15, 20 (no one turned away, full dinner provided)
ANNUAL ANTI-4TH OF JULY BARBECUE
Awarding RnB's annual John Brown Award for Anti-Racist Activism to Lynne Stewart Joined by Mandy Carter, Director of Southerners on New Ground Fundraiser for the National People of Color Nonviolence Network / War Resisters League People of Color Caucus
309 Park Place, Bklyn (btw. Vanderbilt & Underhill) Sponsored by Resistance in Brooklyn, (718) 399-8366

SUN JULY 10

8 – 11pm • \$7
CODE PINK BENEFIT
NYC's most notorious women share the same stage: Lady Unluck, Grounde, ICU, She Wolves, Devil Kit, Courtney Lee Adams Jr., Stark.
Arlene's Grocery 95 Stanton St. (btw. Allen & Orchard)

TUE JULY 12

7:30pm • \$15
A DOG'S LIFE: A DOGAMENTARY
A hilarious documentary about the benefits of the intense bond between dogs and humans, as told by filmmaker and dog owner Gayle Kirschenbaum and her dog Chelsea. Chelsea, rigged with a "doggy cam," hits the streets of New York with Kirschenbaum in search of love. 2004. 51 min.
35 West 67th St.

FRI JULY 16

12 – 5pm • FREE
RED HOOK BLOCK PARTY
Gowanus / 2nd St. Block Party From Louis Valentino Jr. Pier Park on Red Hook's Coffey St, you can almost reach out and touch the Statue of Liberty; Stop by this Sunday for our Red Hook shoreline cleanup and introduction to canoeing program.
2nd and Bond and Canal Sts. F Train, Carroll St. stop

1pm Party, Film Screening at sunset SUBMERGE ART AND ENVIRONMENT FESTIVAL The Urban Divers present an outdoor film screening of several films about the Gowanus Canal. Join us for a party at the shoreline that will include oyster demonstrations, guided canoe tours and we'll be distributing copies of our full-color waterfront resource maps and other literature about the NY / NJ Estuary.
Second and Bond and Canal Sts. F Train Carroll St. stop, www.urbandivers.org

SAT JULY 17

2 – 5pm • FREE
CAKE WALK AND AUCTION WITH AUCTIONEER REVEREND BILLY
Cake Walk labyrinth by Ariane Burgess. Playground of Marte Valle Middle School (Rivington St. between Suffolk & Norfolk Sts.)

JULY 20 – 24

Wed, 6:30 – 8:30pm;
Thurs – Sun, 9:30am – 6:30pm
A 4-DAY INTENSIVE STUDY OF MARXISM WORKSHOP
preregistration advised.
Brecht Forum's New York Marxist School, 451 West Street, New York City. (212) 242-4201

CONTINUING FILM SERIES

MUSIC 8PM / FILMS 9PM • \$8
ROOFTOP FILMS SUMMER SERIES 2005
Independent and underground Films and Music on Rooftops!
July 2: *Dirty Work*
July 9: *Nick Peterson and the Clouds*
July 4: *Some Folks Call It Un-American*
July 16: *Wild Pirate Shorts on Governors Island*
July 1: *Animation!*
July 8: *Soft for Digging*
July 15: *Caught In Between*
July 22: *Kiss My Snake* (World Premiere!) Fridays at the Automotive High School 50 Bedford Avenue in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, directly across the street from McCarran Park. Saturdays at The Old American Can Factory 232 3rd Street @ 3rd Avenue in Park Slope. www.rooftopfilms.com for show details and more! Rain: Indoors at the same location

CONTINUING

THURSDAYS

8pm • FREE
MOVIE NIGHT AT TIMES UP! There will be a short film screened before the feature. TIME'S UP! Space, 49 E. Houston St. (between Mott and Mulberry)

SUNDAYS

7:30pm • FREE
OPEN MIKE NIGHT AT VOXPOL MCed by James Inzeo 1022 Cortelyou Rd. Brooklyn 718.940.2084

JUNE 16 ON

Sun-Fri 11am – 6:30pm Sat 11am – 8pm
\$13.50 – 14.50 (find \$5 discount tix on www.museumofsex.org)
MEN WITHOUT SUITS @ Museumofsex Objectifying the American Male Body *Men Without Suits* explores the impact of photography on American culture. Who makes the images? What is their purpose? Who consumes them. Explores the nature of male erotic appeal, the objectification of the male physique, and the notions of the male nude as both a fantasy and a commodity. 233 Fifth Avenue @ 27th St. www.museumofsex.org

FRIDAY EVENINGS IN JULY

8 – 11pm • \$15 adults / \$8 youth / (\$10 and \$5 advance). Doors open at 7:30 PM
SUNSET MUSIC SERIES Blues, Swing, Rock, Jazz and Country are all a part of the live music scene at Red Hook's Waterfront Museum Showboat Barge in Brooklyn. Tickets for the entire evening at the door or at www.waterfrontmuseum.org Waterfront Museum at 290 Conover St., Brooklyn

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